

Message Text

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PAGE 01 HONG K 04949 181101 Z

45

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 EUR-25 IO-12 ACDA-19 NIC-01 DPW-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 RSR-01 /140 W

----- 099252

R 180832 Z MAY 73

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7005

INFO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI 5165

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

FBIS OKINAWA

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 4949

E. O. 11652: XGDS-2

TAGS: PINT, CH

SUBJECT: FURTHER DECLINE IN THE PLA' S IMAGE

1. IN THE LATEST MARK OF DECLINE IN THE POLITICAL IMAGE OF THE MILITARY IN CHINA, THE PLA' S FORMER DISTINCTION AS THE " STRONG PILLAR OF THE DICTATORSHIP" HAS APPARENTLY PASSED TO THE NOW REVIVING TRADE UNIONS. PROVINCIAL RADIO BROADCASTS FROM HUPEH (MAY 16) AND HUNAN (MAY 17) HAVE APPLIED THAT HONORIFIC, ONCE RESERVED FOR THE PLA, IN SPEAKING OF THE ROLE THAT THE REBUILT TRADE UNIONS ARE TO PLAY.

2. USE OF THE PHRASE IN REFERRING TO THE PLA DROPPED OUT OF FASHION AFTER THE FALL OF LIN PIAO, AND THE AUGUST 1972 ARMY DAY EDITORIAL SCALED DOWN PRAISE FOR THE MILITARY' S POLITICAL FUNCTION (HONG KONG 5255). EARLIER THIS YEAR, THE REGIME' S DIRECTIVE ON THE ANNUAL CAMPAIGN TO FOSTER GOOD ARMY- CIVILIAN RELATIONS WAS DRASTICALLY TRUNCATED AND OMITTED ANY REFERENCE TO THE PLA' S DOMINANT POSTION IN PARTY AND STATE AFFAIRS (HONG KONG 0098).

3. IN THE REALITY BEHIND THE IMAGE, TOP MILITARY LEADERS ARE STILL SIGNIFICANTLY INVOLVED IN POLITICS AND AS SHOWN IN THE
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RECENT CBOEFDAEV
TNDDHINMING MILITARY REGION DEPUTY COMMANDER
LU JUI- LIN TO BE CHIEF IN KWEICHOW PROVINCE, THE REGIME STILL
RESORTS TO USING MILITARY MEN IN COPING WITH TROUBLED PROVINCES
(HONG KONG 3770). HOWEVER, AS SUGGESTED BY INTELLIGENCE
REPORTS THAT THE PLA HAS BEEN ORDERED " BACK TO THE BARRACKS"
(HONG KONG 4171) , AND BY RECENT INDICATIONS THAT DEMOBILIZED
SOLDIERS ARE BEING SENT IN GREATER NUMBERS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE
AS FARMERS (WR 17), A GENUINE DECLINE IN THE PLA' S PROMINENCE
IS GOING ON APACE.
OSBORN

NOTE BY OC/ T: PARA 3 AS RECEIVED. WILL BE SERVICED UPON REQUEST.

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NMAFVVZCZ

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a
*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 MAY 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: willialc
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973HONGK04949
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: HONG KONG
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730548/aaaajkvp.tel
Line Count: 76
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: willialc
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 09 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <09-Aug-2001 by boyleja>; APPROVED <27-Aug-2001 by willialc>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> gwr 980220
Subject: FURTHER DECLINE IN THE PLA' S IMAGE
TAGS: PINT, CH, PINT
To: AMMBASSY AIT TAIPEI
EA
FB ISO
SECSTATE WASHDC
TOKYO
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

